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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-4 in their entirety without prejudice nor disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein.

Please amend claims 5, 8, 10-12, and add new claim 14 as follows:

1.-4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A sliding door structure as defined in claim 1, for a vehicle having a door opening extending from a side body panel of a vehicle body to a roof panel of the vehicle body, sliding door structure comprising:

a sliding door slidably mounted on one side of a vehicle body for sliding movement in a lengthwise direction of the vehicle body between a closed position in said door opening and an opening position wherein said sliding door extends along an outer surface of said side body panel to fully expose said door opening and having a side portion in conformity in configuration with a side opening portion of the door opening and a roof portion in conformity in configuration with a roof opening portion of the door opening; and

a guide mechanism for guiding said sliding movement of said sliding door, said guide mechanism putting said roof portion of said sliding door substantially flush with said roof panel in said closed position and causing said sliding door to shift and swing outward in a transverse direction of the vehicle body so that said roof of said sliding door completely comes out of said roof opening portion of the door opening and to travel rearward in said lengthwise direction at the beginning of opening operation of said sliding door from said closed position toward said closed position;

~~wherein~~ said guide means comprises mechanism comprising:

an upper slide guide assembly comprising a rear guide rail secured to a middle portion of said vehicle body in a vertical direction and a front slider slidably mounted supported for slide movement by said rear guide rail, said front slider being guided by and sliding so as to overlap said rear guide rail when said sliding door travels in said lengthwise direction[[.]];

a swinging mechanism operationally connected between said front slider and said sliding door, said swinging mechanism causing so as to cause said sliding door to swing laterally in said transverse direction when said sliding door travels in said lengthwise

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direction[[,]]; and

a base slide guide rail secured to said vehicle body and ~~connecting~~ connecting for ~~slide movement to said sliding door to said vehicle body for slide movement of said sliding door relative to said vehicle door[[,]]~~ so that said base slide guide rail ~~causing~~ causes said sliding door to shift laterally in said transverse direction when said sliding door travels in said lengthwise direction.

6. (Originally presented) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 5, wherein said swinging mechanism comprises a parallel link mechanism.

7. (Originally presented) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 6, wherein said swinging mechanism is provided with means for absorbing an inclination of said sliding door due to a difference between a distance of said shift movement and a distance of said swing movement.

8. (Currently amended) The sliding door structure as defined in claim [[1]] 5, wherein said upper slide guide assembly is disposed inside said vehicle body.

9. (Originally presented) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 8, wherein said upper slide guide assembly juts out into a passenger compartment of said vehicle body so as to provide a flat surface serving as an arm rest.

10. (Currently amended) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 9, wherein said upper slide guide assembly has a nested construction comprising a rear guide rail extending in said lengthwise direction and secured to said vehicle body and a front slider slidably ~~mounted~~ supported ~~for slide movement to~~ by said rear guide rail and being put alongside said sliding door in said door opening, said front slider being guided by and sliding to overlap said rear guide rail when said sliding door travels in said lengthwise direction to open said door opening.

11. (Currently amended) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 10, and

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further comprising an arm rest fixedly attached to said sliding door and jutting out into a passenger compartment of said vehicle so as to overhang above said front slider when said sliding door is in said door opening and to draw laterally away from said front slider [[16F]] when the sliding door [[5]] swings and shifts outward in a transverse direction.

12. (Currently amended) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 11, and further comprising a rear arm rest fixedly attached to said side body panel [[1]] and jutting out into a passenger compartment of said vehicle, said rear arm rest being so shaped as to conceal said rear guide rail [[16R]].

13. (Currently amended) The sliding door structure as defined in claim 12, and further comprising a front arm rest fixedly attached to said front slider, wherein said rear arm rest conceals said front arm rest attached to said front slider when said sliding door is in said door position.

14. (New) The sliding door structure is defined in claim 5, wherein said sliding door is slidably supported by said vehicle body adjacent to a front door hinged to said vehicle body at a front end of said front door so as to open and close a front door opening in said said body panel and is provided with a sealing member secured to a forward end of said sliding door, said sealing member being brought into abutment against a rearward end of said front door in said front door opening so as to overlap an inner rear edge of said front door when said sliding door is completely put in said door opening.

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